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NEWS RELEASE

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GRAND JURY IN KANSAS CITY RETURNS INDICTMENTS

Kansas City, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that eight individuals were indicted on Oct. 13, 2004, by a federal grand jury in Kansas City, Kan. Those indicted include:

Jason A. Tremble, 22, Topeka, who is charged with illegally possessing a firearm on Oct. 5, 2003 after he had been convicted earlier that year in the District Court of Shawnee County on felony charges of obstruction of justice and possession of cocaine.

Tremble was on probation when was arrested Oct. 5, 2003 at It's Brothers Bar and Grill in Lawrence, Kan. and accused of repeatedly firing a gun in a crowd of people at the bar. Tremble pleaded guilty in Douglas County District Court to 11 counts of aggravated battery and being a felon in possession of a firearm. He received a 40-month sentence in that case.

If convicted on the federal gun charge, Tremble faces up to 10 years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine. The case was investigated by the Lawrence, Kan. Police Department and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Terra Morehead.

Kimberley Sue McClaren, 40, Bonner Springs, Kan., who is charged with two counts of theft from the U.S. mail while she was a rural letter carrier employed by the U.S. Postal Service. She is accused of stealing a Target gift card on May 20, 2004 and two \$5 federal reserve notes on May 25, 2004.

If convicted, McClaren faces up to five years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine on each count. The case was investigated by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

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Juel R. Smotherman, 44, Springhill, Kan., who is charged with six counts of theft from the U.S. mail while she was a rural letter carrier employed by the U.S. Postal Service. Smotherman allegedly stole a Target gift card on April 29, 2004; the contents of a First Class letter on May 11, 2004; \$20 cash on May 11, 2004; the contents of a First Class letter on May 12, 2004; \$15 cash on May 13, 2004; and \$50 cash on May 13, 2004.

If convicted, Smotherman faces up to five years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine on each count. The case was investigated by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

Jose Guadalupe Patricio-Orepeza, 38, a citizen of Mexico, who is charged with illegally reentering the United States on Sept. 20, 2004 after having been convicted of an aggravated felony and deported on Dec. 5, 2000.

If convicted Patricio-Orepeza faces up to 20 years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine. The case was investigated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Christopher M. Daniels, 18, Kansas City, Kan., who is charged with one count of possessing with intent to distribute more than 5 grams of crack cocaine within 1,000 feet of Schlagle High School on June 22, 2004. He also is charged with one count of possession of a firearm, a .45 caliber Springfield Armory pistol, in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime on June 22, 2004.

If convicted, Daniels faces a minimum of five years and a maximum of 40 years in federal prison and a \$2 million fine on the distribution charge; and a minimum of five years and a maximum of life in prison on the gun charge. The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and it is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Terra Morehead.

Joseph C. Harris, 22, Kansas City, Kan., who is charged with illegally possessing a firearm – a 9 m.m. Smith & Wesson handgun – after being convicted in 2001 on two counts of possession of cocaine.

If convicted, Harris faces up to 10 years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine. The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Terra Morehead.

Maurice Trotter, 30, Lawrence, Kan., and **Mardell Trotter**, 29, Lawrence, Kan., who are charged with a series of drug trafficking crimes that occurred between November 2002 and Aug. 6, 2004.

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Maurice Trotter and Mardell Trotter are charged together in five counts including: conspiring to distribute 3 to 4 kilograms of crack cocaine within 1,000 feet of New York Elementary School, Kennedy Elementary School and Central Junior High School; possessing with intent to distribute 41.81 grams of crack cocaine on Aug. 6, 2004 within 1,000 feet of Kennedy Elementary School; possessing cocaine with intent to distribute on Aug. 6, 2004 within 1,000 feet of Kennedy Elementary School; possessing marijuana with intent to distribute on Aug. 6, 2004; and possessing a firearm – a 9 mm Beretta – in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime on Aug. 6, 2004.

Maurice Trotter also is charged alone in four counts including: distributing crack cocaine within 1,000 feet of New York Elementary School on April 13, 2004; distributing crack cocaine within 1,000 feet of Kennedy Elementary School on July 19, 2004; distributing crack cocaine within 1,000 feet of New York Elementary School on July 23, 2004; and distributing crack cocaine within 1,000 feet of Kennedy Elementary School on July 31, 2004.

Mardell Trotter also is charged alone in three counts, including distributing crack cocaine within 1,000 feet of Central Junior High School on Aug. 3, 2004; distributing crack cocaine on Aug. 5, 2004; and illegally possessing a firearm on Aug. 6, 2004 after being convicted in 1999 on a charge of distributing crack cocaine.

If convicted on the joint charges, both Trotters face not less than 10 years in prison and not more than life – and an \$8 million fine – on the conspiracy count; not more than 40 years and a \$2 million fine on the Aug. 6, 2004 cocaine charge at Kennedy Elementary; not less than 5 years and not more than 80 years – and a \$4 million fine – on the Aug. 6, 2004 crack cocaine charge at Kennedy Elementary; and not less than five years and not more than life – and a \$250,000 fine – on the count of using a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

If convicted on the counts in which he is charged alone, Maurice Trotter faces a maximum penalty of up to 40 years in prison and a \$2 million fine on each of the four distributing counts.

If convicted on the counts in which he is charged alone, Mardell Trotter faces a maximum penalty of up to 40 years in prison and a \$2 million fine on each of the two distribution charges and up to 10 years and a \$250,000 fine on the firearms charge.

The case was investigated by the Lawrence, Kan., Police Department and it is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Terra Morehead.

As in any criminal case, a person is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The indictments filed merely contain allegations of criminal conduct.